

POPPY.

From the (Vn.) Spirit of Democracy.
Bachelors Philosophy.

BY LEWIS CIST.

"Ay! 'tis man's best philosophy: when woman proves untrue,
The loss of one should only teach to make another do!"

"Bachelors—These gentlemen accept all the pleasures of society, and suppone of its expenses. They dine out and are not expected to give dinners in return. Instead of taking a box by the year, they buy an admission for life; their carriage only holds two; and they are never obliged to sit down with a dowager. Weddings, christenings, fetes—nothing comes amiss to them. They are not regularly assailed with milliners', stay-makers', and jewellers' bills. We never see them running themselves in suits for conjugal rights, to them 'La belle Mere' is destitute of point, and they yawn at 'La Femme jalouse.' They are never Godfathers for reciprocity, they sleep in peace during the best part of the morning, leave balls when they like; and invest money in the funds!"—Quarterly Review.

I'm fairly sick of it!—to hear, and read,
Of 'true love' and 'false love'—'tis strange to me,
That my thing of which so much is heard,
And read, and spoken, we should never see;
At least, I'm sure I never have seen one—
Though candor does require me to confess
I do believe that Shickville's famous son
Reports one, doubtless an authentic case;
But he, in his own folly, met his fate,
Striving to lift so ponderous a weight!

And yet I frankly own 'there was a time'—
Albeit ashamed my folly to acknowledge;
However, that was long before my prime,
In fact, 'twas in my boyish days, at college,
I then but verged upon destruction's brink,
And hence perhaps was not so much to blame;
Time was though, I was fool enough to think
That love was not a fiction, a mere name!
That there were vows might constancy broken,
And that some fond hearts might perhaps be broken.

Since then however, I've had leisure given—
Long years of thought, deep, sad and melancholy,
In which to reconcile myself with Heaven,
And to repent my egregious folly
In dreaming of the possibility,
In such an all-perfidious world as this,
Of honest love, or perfect constancy,
Or truth in hieble woman's treacherous kiss;
Though, on this score, I haven't much to grieve,
Indeed it's what I never did believe!

I am not a misanthropist I'm sure;
I can admire fair Nature and I do—
I love the bright, the beautiful the pure,
And childhood innocent, and naughted true;
And I admire a good woman's form and face;
(I might indeed declare I think 'tis all
To be admired about her—let it pass—
And o'er her frailties let the curtain fall.)
Yet was I never one of these weak things
Who think her "all an angel—save the wings?"

But yet a something there might be, I thought
In man's deep love, and woman's form and face—
Her truth and constancy, and—God knows what!
I've long since found but words and emptiness:
I even dreamed I might be broken-hearted,
Should she—my young heart's idol, prove untrue;
Well! she did so—as easily we part;
As one would throw away a worn-out shoe;
A little touched my heart might be, but then
It very soon grew sound and whole again.

And now I've come to think with Dr. Holmes—
(Who, by the way, is a very clever fellow.)
He's but a fool, who at the falsehood fawns
Of any one that ever told great truths.
Reader, 'tis the wisest thing that you can do—
I've tried the plan and know that it will answer,
Where'er one lovely charger proves untrue,
Is—just to get another, soon as you can, sir;
Though for myself when one fair prove untrue,
For her I've made several dozen do!

And so I take things easy—rove about,
And love each pretty woman that I meet,
Devotedly—until I find her out.
To be, (as are they all), but fair deceit:
Yet when I find her so, I do not grieve—
I look not now to find her any other;
So I but make my love and take my leave,
And cruise around until I meet another
To strike my fancy—she's not hard to find
In my contented present state of mind.

True! once it no such easy matter seemed;
But that was at an early time of life.
The when—a silly errand youth I dreamed
Of love and moonshine, marriage and a wife.
Thank heaven that snare's escaped! and now it is
A most indifferent thing sort of matter,
To find a dozen pretty girls to kiss,
Flirt with, make love to, dance and smile, and chatter;
Although my eyes I have to keep wide open,
That none to matrimony me may dupe in!

But ah! a most delightful thing I find
This slipping sweet from earth's enchanting flower,
Still free to wander on and leave behind
Untasted all its bitter and its sour:
And when some flow'et fades, whose lovely form,
If all mine own, 'twould kill me to resign,
I turn to others, yet with beauty warm,
And thank kind heaven the treasure was not mine!
Let Benedicts then boast of child and wife—
Be mine a Bachelors free and merry life.
Fiddle's Green, October 1841.

Law.

Of lawyers I am half disposed
To think sweet from earth's enchanting flower,
Why is it that so few at law
Have real justice done 'em.

In cases plain as A B C,
How many juries stumble,
And give occasion—well they may—
For honest men to grumble.

The lawyers—they alone are fed
When people fight and slander;
They call each client, and 'tis true,
A silly goose or gander.

In times of general joy and peace,
The lawyers are less plenty;
When times are hard they multiply
From two to three to twenty.

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POPULAR TALES.

The Lone Farm-House.

BY A SOLICITOR.

About thirteen miles from Shrewsbury, on the main road to Ludlow, the long, straggling village of Church Stretton occupies the centre of a narrow valley, shut in by low wooden hills, through which may a winding glen leads westward through the Longmynd hills toward Bishop-castle and the Lippstone. This part of the country is even now wild and barren, the haunt of grouse and snipe, and screaming plover; but still some fields have been enclosed, and sundry farms marked off where, fifty years ago, all was soft marsh or green heather. Far in the centre of the waste, at least three miles from any village, there stood, at the time we speak of, a lone farm-house, completely shut in by three round grassy hills, between two of which a cart track led out to the high road, while between another pair a little brook trickled and trickled by, on its way to the distant Severn. In the hollow and on the hill-side were patches of barley and oats, and a few roods of potatoes; but all the rest was a bare mountain sheep-walk, without a tree or a corn-field to vary the monotonous of grass. It was a desolate spot in winter, when the swollen stream rushed hoarsely down the glen, and fierce blasts came raging and howling through one or other of the hollows; nor would every woman have borne the savage solitude with the courage and indifference displayed by the good wife of Longhope Farm.

She was, indeed, an ordinary character. Her father had occupied a few acres of land at Pilyerbatch, a small village about four miles from Longhope, but, for several years before his death, he had been a complete cripple, unable to labor, and supported solely by the vigorous activity of his daughter Rebecca. She managed every thing herself—ploughed, dug, hoed, and made hay in turn; bought and sold to the best advantage; kept the house in order, and husbanded their slender resources with the utmost economy. When the old man died, and the necessity for such constant exertion no longer existed, she listened to John Morgan's proposal that they should marry, make a joint stock of their little properties, and try to earn an honest livelihood out of the mountain farms. Accordingly, the marriage took place, and a lease of Longhope was obtained on favorable terms.

Three years had elapsed, and the farmer was now a thriving man owing in a great degree to the good sense and activity of his helpmate. For some time she had done all the household work, and the birth of a child, in the second year of the marriage, obliged her to engage the services of a young girl from Pilyerbatch, named Jessie Williams, in winter two or three laborers and shepherds were generally lodged about the farm, but in summer time it often happened that, for days together, there was no one at Longhope except the good wife, her child, and her maid. Both Morgan and his wife, from living so near the border, were half Welsh people, and both were kind hearted and hospitable when opportunity offered.

Little Jessie, on her first arrival, had been quite dismayed by the loneliness and solitude; but habit and active employment, together with occasional visits from a village sweetheart, soon reconciled her to the change. It must be confessed that her admirer, young Harry Watkins, was by no means above the ordinary race of mortals, for he was slouching and lumpyish in his appearance, in thought passionate, and as obstinate as a Kerry pig. On the other hand, he was a hard-working lad, who supported both himself and his aged parents; and he had somehow managed not only to settle in his own mind that Jessie should become his wife some time or other, but also to impress the same notion upon her, she scarcely knew how. It was therefore almost a matter of course, on every fine Sunday afternoon, for Watkins, in his bright red waistcoat, and Jessie, in her blue cotton gown and gipsy bonnet, to roam 'over the hills and far away,' or else to stand side by side in the aisle of one of the neighboring churches.

But "the course of true love never did run smooth." Even in the solitude of Longhope, a rival intervened to disturb Harry Watkins' calm security. On various occasions Jessie had been sent to Church Stretton to procure household articles or woman's gear for dame Morgan, and being a pretty, fresh colored lass she had attracted the notice of Joe Garbett, or lurking Joe, as he was called, who was not long in making her acquaintance. In truth, Joe was by no means bashful or afflicted with doubts as to his personal merit. He was a slight, active fellow, with light brown eyes, the left being half closed from a confirmed habit of winking. There was a knowing, jaunty air about him, which made him pass among the clodhoppers for "main clever," a character which he laudably endeavored to maintain by constantly taking them in. Numberless were the pints of beer he drank at their expense, by means of tricky wagers, or skilful doses of flattery; yet Joe was always a welcome guest at the top room of the Talbot or Buck's where his songs or ready-witted jests gave life and animation to the circle of heavy-headed beer drinkers. The old farmers, indeed, shook their heads, and prophesied that he would come to no good; but among the "lads of the village," we may add, the lasses too, Joe was a universal favorite. He soon managed to establish himself in Jessie's good graces, who was greatly flattered by such a conquest; indeed he might almost be considered as her first lover, for her old lover she had known from a child, and the change from a play-fellow to a lover had been scarcely perceptible. Gar-

bett, too, was so much more insinuating and attentive, constantly walking part way home with her, carrying her basket, and chatting with a gaiety which contrasted strongly with Harry Watkins' matter-of-fact conversation. He took great care, however, not to come near the farm, and there was so little intercourse between Longhope and the neighborhood, that Jessie's new lover might have remained unknown for a long time, if she herself had not given mysterious hints on the subject to Watkins. It was some time before he comprehended her, and when he did, his behavior was so outrageous, and he treated Jessie so much like a criminal for daring to have another admirer, that her spirit rose against it, and she declared her determination not to be scolded by him any more; he need never come after her again, she added, for Joe Garbett was a hundred times kinder and handsomer; and a way she bounded like a Welsh pony from a stranger that tries to catch him, leaving Watkins dumb with sheer amazement his face rivalling in color the scarlet waistcoat below.

The result was, that Harry Watkins, on the very next Sunday, went to Longhope, and told dame Morgan his grievances. The good dame, knowing him to be a steady, respectable lad, and having heard that Garbett was the very reverse, spoke seriously to Jessie, and even insisted on her giving up this new acquaintance altogether. But her interference only made the damsel more obstinate than before, and more resolved to be "off with the old love" and to be "on with the new." She was obliged, however, in future, to meet lurking Joe secretly, and that worthy took special care not to be seen in the neighborhood. Thus matters remained until the twenty-second of August, 17—, a day to be marked blood-red in the calendar of fate, so pregnant was it with death and anguish to the inhabitants of Longhope Farm.

It was the week of Ludlow fair, and farmer Morgan had attended, and as usual, both to sell his sheep and wool, and to buy fresh stock for the winter feed. The sheep sold well, but winter stock being in great demand, the farmer determined not to buy at the fair, but to try his luck at Bishopscastle, where there was to be a cattle sale on Saturday; so tying up his money, a good deal of which was in guineas and silver, in a canvas bag, he mounted his nag and made for Longhope. A ride of sixteen miles brought him to Church Stretton, where he drew up at the Buck's Head for an hour, to enjoy a pipe and tankard in the crowded tap-room. Lurking Joe, as usual, was one of the party, and though the farmer knew nothing of the affair between him and Jessie, he had a natural contempt for him which the hard-working man is sure to feel towards an idle scoundrel, nor could all Joe's songs and jests attract his attention. But Garbett himself was not so indifferent. The quick witted fellow had caught the heavy sound of the money-bag in the farmer's great coat as he threw it off, and when Morgan cautiously transferred the treasure to his coat-pocket for greatest security, Joe's eye had lighted for an instant on the bulging canvass. That mere sound, that momentary glance, was enough to raise in his evil mind the ghastly vision of a horrible crime. Unconscious of the coming doom, the farmer smoked on, and when his pipe and pot were both expended, rode stoutly away to his lone house among the hills. Far up the glen he saw the cherry blaze of his own hearth, kindled, most likely, for the commonest purposes, yet "it looked like a welcoming," and he pressed on the faster to gain that comfortable fire-side. A sturdy halloo brought out a herdsmann who took care of his horse, and Morgan was soon installed in the chimney-corner, talking over the events of the day with his wife, while Jessie, bustling about, arranging the materials for a right substantial supper.

Rebecca Morgan suited her husband exactly. Her courageous temper, persevering industry, and good management, were just such manly virtues as the stout yeoman knew how to value; he felt a respect for his helpmate, consulted her on all occasions and availed himself of her strong good sense without a particle of jealousy, or the least dread of being hepecked. There was no sentiment or refinement in either, but good old English feeling was not wanting. And when their early time of rest arrived, and the couple stood by the bed where their child lay, soft and warm, sleeping the summer's night away, the farmer's "God bless 'em," and the mother's light kisses on the cheek, were truer far, and, if rightly looked at, far more affecting, than if the expression of parental love had been clothed in daintier phrases; yet the same heart that will feel little interest in the homely affection of yeoman in his lone farm-house, will soften at once beneath the graceful sorrowing adieus of the cold hearted Mary of Scotland.

Little cared the bluff farmers for such reflections. The live-long night he snored and slept with a vigorous enjoyment of rest that knew no interruption, and when Saturday morning rose bright and clear, out he tumbled, got into his clothes, dipped his head into a bucket of water, and routed out the shepherds and herdsmen with a bustle and activity that would have astonished the farmers of our degenerate days. In less than an hour he and all his men were off across the mountains to Bishopscastle, and, as Morgan intended to drive home whatever sheep he might purchase that same day, he was not likely to return before dark. As they were leaving the farm, one of the shepherds fancied he saw a man's face looking on from the hill top, but it vanished so quickly, and the pumpkin cared too little about the matter, to think it worth mentioning to his comrades.

While the men folks were away, the good wife and Jessie were busily engaged the live-long day in brewing a cask of home-made—and hard work it was to fill the copper from the brook, ladle out the hot wort, and set it to cool in the marsh-tub. But all was done before dusk; the cooled liquor thrown back again into the boilers to remain until Monday, the marsh-tubs all cleaned up and turned over on the floor, and every thing set in order, to the high satisfaction both of mistress and maid. Dame Morgan had just sung her little Johnny to sleep, and leaving him in his bed, had returned to the large room, which, like the collier's stall, served for kitchen, and parlor, and all, when she saw three men enter the farmyard and approach the house. She went to the door, immediately, when one of the three stepped forward, and very civilly asked her to give them a bit of bread and cheese and a cup of beer, as they had lost their way among the hills.

Such claims on her hospitality had frequently occurred in that country, and she made no difficulty about giving the refreshment they required, but not liking that the room she had just cleaned up should be dirtied again by those strangers, she called Jessie, and bade her carry some bread and cheese and ale into a sort of open shed across the yard, where, in fine weather, the shepherd's commonly took their meals.

The moment Jessie set eyes on the men, or rather, on one of them, she started, and reddened, and cast such furtive glances at her mistress, that the latter guessed instantly that one of the men must be Joe Garbett. She felt a great inclination to pack the whole of them off without ceremony, for coming in that underhand way where they were not welcome, but, on second thoughts, she determined to wait until her husband returned, and leave him to deal with them. Jessie bustled about to hide her confusion, looked at a huge brown loaf and half a cheese, and bidding the men follow her, she tripped gaily across the farmyard.

She had not been gone a minute before a scream roused dame Morgan's anger still more against the men who, she imagined, had been rude to her little maiden, and brimful of wrath, she hurried to the door.

Ha! there is no romping! Shrieking in wild terror the blood gushing in streams through the hands that clasped her throat, Jessie was staggering out of the shed. Close at her back followed one of the men with a bloody knife, and, cursing fiercely, thrice he stabbed the poor girl with all his might. The blows forced her against the shed, and the smallest man of the three, springing forward with an oath, caught up a broken ploughshare, and drove it on the victim's head with crushing violence—she dropt, and there was no more shrieking.

Another instant, and unconsciously from dame Morgan's lips in a hoarse whisper—the next instant her own fearful danger flashed on her mind. To shut the door and down with the wooden bar was instinctive. What next? Alas! she could neither resist nor fly. There was not a moment to think. The man-tub caught her eye—she flung herself down on the floor, pulled the tub over her, and had just time to coil herself round before the ruffians burst in fierce execrations. She heard their horrible threats, the eager search made for her, the vigorous rage they showed when she was not to be found. All agreed that it was impossible she could have escaped, and again and again every hiding-place was ransacked except the one—nay, two of them even sat down on the tub, and reproached one another with having murdered Jessie too soon, as they wanted her to tell them the "old un's" hiding-place.

There she lay close coiled, knees, elbows, and head all jammed together, not three inches from them, in fear doubtless—immortal agonizing fear—but still with every faculty sharpened to a painful acuteness, and not without a silent hope that the good God would yet protect her.

O heart of proof, stand firm! She heard one of the ruffians start up, and declare that he would soon find out where she was. There was a cry—the cry of her little Johnny—the mother's heart springing to her lips, for she had not thought of danger to him.

"Ay, burn the kitten," said one, with a mocking laugh, "and the old cat will soon come out." "Well done, Joe," replied another, "clap his toes to the bars!" "Mercy! mercy! they are torturing her child! His shrill screams of pain ring in her ears—there is a hissing sound of burning flesh—oh! she can not bear it—the devilish practice will—the tub rises—no, it falls again, and the miscreants have not seen it move."

"I can't save him, I can't save him," muttered the strong hearted woman to herself with maniac rapidity. She gnawed her arm to the bone, but felt it not, for she dare not stop her ears, and the piercing cries of her child thrilled through her brain with a bitter agony that mocked all other pain. Screams after screams continued, she knew not how long, and still, with resolute courage, she lay silent and motionless as the dead baffling the hellish scheme of these bloody murderers. At length they too were wearied of the poor infant's cries.

"Stop that reptile's squalling, Joe," said one, surily; the next instant there was a dull heavy sound, as of something soft swung against the wall, and the cries immediately ceased. Then the mother knew that her little boy was dead.

The ruffians must have proceeded to search the house for plunder, since the next thing the miserable woman remembered was the rattling of money over her head. They had actually chosen the bottom of the marsh-tub as the place on which to divide their booty, and talk over their future plans! After counting out to each other the price of blood, which was, after all, an inconsiderable escape, and the danger there was that she was might be able to recognize them—

All agreed that they must quit that part of the country, but it was at last arranged that, before they went, they would, on the next Sunday night, break into the house of a Mr. Harper, near Longden, which had been marked by the gang for plunder, on account of the quantity of plate it was known to contain. And then with brutal oaths and grumbings at their scanty booty, the miscreants went away, not dreaming that a just Providence had posted in the very scene of their crimes, a living witness to work out the destined retribution.

In about an hour afterwards, when it was almost dark, the farmer and his men came down the glen driving a large flock of sheep before them. But this time no cheerful blaze greeted Morgan's return. He rode a short distance ahead, and was surprised to see the yard gate open. The silence too, was unusual; and when he found the door of his house ajar, and no light within, he dismounted hastily, and entered, in some apprehension. No one was there; he called out, "Becky!" "Jessy!" but they came not. Dreadfully alarmed, he rushed to the smouldering fire, thrust in some sticks, and stirred it into a blaze. The quivering light fell strongly on a white bundle at his feet, streaked with red. He lifted it up—good Heavens! it is the bloody corpse of a child! His shout of horror brought in the shepherds; all stood gazing in dumb consternation, when, to their infinite terror, a marsh-tub which lay on the floor slowly rose up, and the form of a woman gradually uncoiled itself into a kneeling posture, like one rising from the grave. The face was deadly pale, and the open eye stared vacantly upon them. At this fearful apparition, the men shrank back in superstitious dread, and even the stout farmer quailed.—"Becky!" at last he uttered, in a doubtful tone. She nodded. "Becky!" he said again, more confidently. She stretched out her arm, and Morgan, recovering his self-possession, caught her up like a feather, and vehemently demanded his child. The rough embrace roused her from the trance into which she had fallen.—"Johnny is dead!"—and that was all she would answer. "Search the place!" shouted the farmer furiously, "there has been murder here!"

And while the men, with lighted sticks, and what weapons they could find, hurried through the house and outbuildings, again Morgan questioned his wife as to what had happened. But it was in vain: and, carrying her to a seat by the fire, he was about to join the men in their search, when all at once she burst into a laugh which froze her life blood.

"They burned him—ha! ha! ha! ha!" she yelled frantically: "they burned Johnny till he screamed so,"—and she imitated the poor child's cries with a strange exactness, ending in a fit of violent convulsions. It took four men to hold her down while it lasted, but afterwards she was so weak that Morgan carried her to bed without any opposition and she lay quiet enough muttering to herself incoherently.

The men had brought in Jessie's dead body, and as it was quite clear that murder had been committed, one of the shepherds set off on horseback for Church Stretton to obtain assistance. The people there were almost all in bed, but as he rode through the village, bellowing "Murder!" at the top of his voice, every one rushed out to learn the cause.

Within half an hour, all the men in the place had started for Longhope; a rigorous examination was made, both on the farm itself, and over the neighborhood hills; but nothing was discovered, and the only chance was, that dame Morgan might be able to give some clue to the mystery. The village surgeon had already bled her, and administered a strong opiate, so that nothing could well be learned of her before morning.—Meantime, the rumor of what had happened spread far and wide, and, during the forenoon of Sunday, people kept pouring in from all the neighboring villages in crowds. Among the foremost was Harry Watkins, to whom poor Jessie's fate seemed almost incredible. He shed a few natural tears on first seeing her dead body, but the sight of her gaping wounds roused his dogged temper, and all other feelings were absorbed in the one burning thirst for vengeance. As yet, however, no one could point out the murderer, and he stalked moodily about, with flushed face and set teeth, glaring without reply to any one who spoke to him.

At last it was buzzed about that dame Morgan had awoke quite sensible, and that the constable was taking her deposition; upon which Watkins forced his way up to the bed-room door, where his well known connexion with the murdered girl procured him admittance. There were only four others present, consisting of the farmer, the constable, and his assistants, to whom dame Morgan, propped up in the bed with pillows, was faintly telling her tale of horror.

"I could not save him, John, indeed I could not," she said in a deprecating tone, as she spoke of their tortured child; and, in spite of her husband's kind assurances and hearty commendations she looked up in his face again and again, repeating the same pathetic appeal: "Indeed and indeed, I could not save him!"

The intelligence she gave showed clearly that Joe Garbett had been one of the three men.—Above all, the intended robbery at Longden was of the last importance, and the constable, enjoining to all present the utmost secrecy, hurried off to make arrangements for capturing the villains that night at Mr. Harper's. The crowd of idlers without, unable to gather any information from the man of office, closed round Harry Watkins with eager inquiries; but he only shored them surily aside without noticing their questions, and strode away over the hill at a desperate pace.

Meanwhile preparations were made, with the utmost caution, for seizing the three desperadoes. Mr. Harper was warned of the intended robbery; one by one, the constables of Church Stretton and Longhope, with for assistants doped quietly into his house; Morgan, too, would be present, in spite of all remonstrance; the family were directed to go to church as usual, and when the bell ceased tolling, three of the men hid themselves in the front parlor, and the remaining three, with Morgan in the drawing room at the back. The case stood by itself, having pleasure grounds, both in front and rear, and stables and other offices at each side. Half an hour had



